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your elective franchises lying dormant forty years, in consequence of the compromise which has disgraced this country, it could not be expected that the spirit of independence should be at once as conspicuous with us as it is in the neighbouring county of Kent. However, the foundation is laid, and the best return that I can make for your favour, is to continue to support this constitutional work.

Mr. Houlstan has no reason to boast of his majority; his return is owing to the disunion of his enemies, not to the strength of his friends. A third of the freeholders have not polled; the leading Whig interest have not moved; hundreds of my friends did not give me their votes, because they thought there was no chance of overtaking my opponent.

An exposure of some of the instances of influence and tyranny which have been exercised will be my first object. If they do not deter the enemies of your independence from such venal practices in future, they will, I hope, encourage you to resist them, and teach you that your country is your surest party and your best friend.

I am, gentlemen, your faithful friend and obliged servant,

MONTAGU BURGOYNE.

Chelmsford, Feb. 17.

ENGLISH ROMAN CATHOLIC PETITION.

To the honourable the commons of the united Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in parliament assembled:

We, whose names are underwritten, Roman Catholics of England, humbly beg leave to represent to your honourable house—

That at the time of his majesty's accession to the throne, the laws in force against his English Roman Catholic subjects, deprived them of most of the rights of Englishmen, and of several of the common rights of mankind.

That by the acts of the 18th and 21st years of his majesty's reign, several of the penalties and disabilities under which the English Roman Catholics laboured were removed:

That the English Roman Catholics are most grateful for the relief granted by these acts, and have taken and subscribed the oaths and declarations contained in them:

That their conduct hath been conformable to their professions; in peaceable submission to the laws, and in the discharge of moral or civil duty, they have not been exceeded by any of his majesty's subjects; they have served him effectively and honourably in his

fleets and armies; there never has been a call upon Englishmen to do their duty, which the English Roman Catholics have not been forward to answer:

That several penal and disabling laws are yet in force against them; they are not equally entitled with their fellow subjects to vote at the election of any member of your honourable house; they are excluded from a seat in either houses of parliament; they are not admissible into corporations; every civil and military office is denied them; every laudable object of ambition, all that elevates a man among his fellow subjects—all hopes of public distinction—all means of attracting the notice of their country, or the favour of their sovereign, are placed without their reach.

The more they deserve of their country the more sensibly their country makes them feel this exclusion. In the ranks she suffers them to fight her battles, but to them victory is without its reward, promotion is wholly denied them; no services can advance, no merit enable them to profit of their country's favour.

Even in their humble situation of private soldiers, the law follows them with pains and penalties. By the articles of war, if soldiers refuse to attend the religious worship of the established church, they are punishable by fine, imprisonment and death. Thus the Catholic soldiers are incessantly exposed to the cruel alternative of either making a sacrifice of their religion, or incurring the extreme of legal punishment, than which your petitioners humbly conceive, there never has been, and cannot be a more direct religious persecution. To an alternative equally oppressive, the English Roman Catholics are exposed on their marriages; the law requires for the legal validity of a marriage in England, that it should be celebrated in a parish church. As Roman Catholics believe marriage to be a sacrament, the English Roman Catholics naturally feel great repugnance to a celebration of their marriages in other churches than their own.

They are cruelly debarred from any means which their fellow subjects possess of providing for their families, by employments of honour or emolument; so that while they bear their full share of the general contribution to the wants of the state, they are denied even a hope of participating in those advantages, by which the burthen of their fellow subjects is alleviated.

In other occurrences of life the law has the same humiliating and depressing

operation on your petitioners. Thus every Roman Catholic subject of his majesty, is forced below his fair line in society, and the general body is a marked and insulated cast.

Yet the Roman Catholics form more than one fourth of the whole mass of the subjects of the united empire. Whatever there is of genius, of talent, or of energy among them, is absolutely lost for public use; and this at a time when the united empire is engaged in a conflict formidable beyond example, and it therefore seems important, if not essential to her preservation, that she could call into action, without qualification, or limit, or any religious test, or declaration, the genius, talents, and energies of all her subjects.

It is true, that your petitioners profess some religious principles which are not professed by the established church, and to this, and to this only, their refusal of certain tests, oaths, and declarations is owing, which subjects them to the pains and disabilities they complain of, but none of the principles, which occasion their refusal, affects their moral, civil, or political integrity; and your petitioners humbly submit to this honourable house, that no principle which leaves moral or political integrity unimpaired, is a proper object of religious persecution; besides, the whole creed of your petitioners was once the creed of the three kingdoms; it is the actual creed of four-fifths of Ireland, and of much the greater part of Europe. It was the creed of those who founded British liberty at Runnymede, who conquered at Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt; among those who repelled and annihilated the Spanish Armada, none bore a nobler part than those by whom this creed was professed. In all these achievements, in every other scene, in which the ancient valour or ancient wisdom of this country has been displayed, the ancestors or several of your petitioners have been distinguished, their creed did not lessen their zeal for their king and country—it does not lessen that of their descendants.

Every disloyal or immoral principle which malice or credulity has imputed to them, your petitioners have solemnly and repeatedly disclaimed. They believe there does not now exist an honourable man who imputes these principles to them; they have sworn to be faithful and bear true allegiance to his majesty, and have acted up to their professions; they most confidently appeal to this honourable house, and to the whole empire, whether in loyalty to

his majesty, attachment to the constitution, or zeal for their country's good they are not equal, and are not known and acknowledged to be equal to his majesty's other subjects.

Therefore, conscious of the truth of these representations, and with the most perfect reliance on the wisdom and justice of your honourable house,

Your petitioners humbly pray for a total repeal of every test, oath, declaration, or provision, which has the effect of subjecting your petitioners to any penalty or disability whatsoever, on account of their religious principles.

PETITION OF THE CATHOLICS OF IRELAND.

(PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE OF COMMONS)
To the honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed on behalf of ourselves and of others his majesty's subjects, professing the Roman Catholic Religion in Ireland, humbly beg leave to represent to this honourable house,

"That we, your petitioners, did in the years 1805 and 1808, humbly petition this honourable house, praying the total abolition of the penal laws which aggrieve the Catholics of Ireland.

"We now feel ourselves obliged in justice to ourselves, our families, and our country once more to solicit the attention of this honourable house to the subject of our said petition.

"We state that the Roman Catholics constitute the most numerous and increasing portion of the inhabitants of Ireland; comprising an immense majority of the manufacturing, trading and agricultural interests, and amounting to at least four-fifths of the Irish population, that they contribute largely to the exigencies of their country, civil and military, that they pay the far greater part of the public and local taxes, that they supply the armies and navies of this empire with upwards of one-third part in number of the soldiers and sailors employed in the public service, and that notwithstanding heavy discouragements, they form the principal constituent part of the strength, wealth and industry of Ireland.

"Yet such is the grievous operation of the penal laws of which we complain, that the Roman Catholics are thereby not only set apart from their fellow subjects, as aliens in their native land, but are ignominiously and rigorously proscribed from almost all situations of public trust, honour or emolument, including every public function and department, from the